

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 06272 161625Z

41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SS-15 PM-04 INR-07 SP-02 /039 W

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5878

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 6272

STADIS////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (MIDDENDORF, WILLIAM J.)

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRAVEL OF SECRETARY OF NAVY

REF: STATE 228297

1. IF WE WERE TO TELL SAG THAT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY MIDDENDORF WISHED TO COME IN LATE OCTOBER OR EARLY NOVEMBER, THEY WOULD OFFICIALLY WELCOME HIM. NOR WOULD THEY -- OUT OF RESPECT FOR A HIGH AMERICAN OFFICIAL, WHO IS ALREADY PERSONALLY KNOWN TO THEM -- ALLOW THE SUGGESTION TO ESCAPE THAT THEIR WELCOME WAS LESS THAN TOTAL AND SINCERE.

2. WE KNOW HOWEVER THAT HANDLING OF HIGH US OFFICIALS CAN BE A BURDEN ON SAG. PRINCE SULTAN WILL BE DEPARTING FOR LONDON IN EARLY NOVEMBER, AND THE PROPOSED DATES WILL BE BUSY ONES FOR THE SAG IN ANY CASE.

3. A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY WILL BE USEFUL AND WELCOME IF HE IS ABLE TO ADVANCE SUBSTANTIVELY THE SAUDI NAVAL EXPANSION PROGRAM. BUT IF THE SAG CONCLUDES THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT WAS PRIMARILY REPRESENTATIONAL, IT WILL BE DISAPPOINTED. IF THIS MAY PROVE TO BE THE CASE, IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE SECRETARY NOT TO COME.

HORAN

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